UNITED
NATIONS

CRC

Convention on the
Rights of the Child

Distr.
GENERAL

CRC/C/SR.79
6 May 1994

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Fourth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 79th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 22 September 1993, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mrs. BADRAN

CONTENTS

Consideration of reports of States parties (continued)

Indonesia

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Official Records Editing Section, room E.4108, Palais des Nations, Geneva.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of the Committee at this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

GE.93-18561 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF STATES PARTIES (agenda item 4) (continued)

Initial report of Indonesia (CRC/C/3/Add.10)

1. The CHAIRPERSON invited the Indonesian delegation, consisting of Mr. Suyono Yahya, Secretary of the Minister Coordinator for Public Welfare, Mr. Sutopo Martomardoyo, Senior Adviser to the Minister, Mr. Makmur Widodo, Counsellor at the Permanent Mission in Geneva, Mrs. Wiwiek Setyawati, official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Arif Havas Oegroseno, Third Secretary at the Permanent Mission in Geneva, to take places at the Committee table. She welcomed the delegation and invited Mr. Yahya, head of the delegation, to introduce his Government's report (CRC/C/3/Add.10).

2. Mr. YAHYA (Indonesia) expressed the hope that the dialogue which was about to take place between his delegation and the Committee would help the Indonesian Government to implement the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in view of the importance which Indonesia attached to the protection of these rights. Full implementation of the Convention was a long-term task which had been incorporated into the national long-term development programme.

3. The CHAIRPERSON thanked Mr. Yahya for his introduction and invited the Indonesian delegation to respond to the first 10 issues on the list of issues (CRC/C.4/WP.2) in the section entitled "General measures of implementation", which read as follows:

"General measures of implementation

(Arts. 4, 42 and 44, para. 6, of the Convention)

1. Please provide more details about the process of preparing the report, in particular with regard to popular participation and the involvement of non-governmental organizations.

2. What concrete measures have been taken to make the report widely available to the public at large?

3. What further steps are planned for creating widespread awareness among adults and children about the principles and provisions of the Convention? Is the text translated into some local languages?

4. To what extent have school curricula been adjusted to give room for education about the Convention? What measures have been taken to train professional groups about the Convention?

5. Please describe the precise functions and activities of the National Council of Child Welfare Development as well as the National Committee and Provincial Committees. Are there other national

institutions created to promote the rights of the child and monitor implementation? How do these bodies relate to non-governmental organizations?

6. What is the status of the Convention in relation to national law? Can the provisions of the Convention be invoked in court?

7. Please provide information on the measures taken to establish/improve the mechanisms for the collection of statistical data and other information on the status of children as a basis for designing programmes for the rights of the child and indicate whether there is a need for technical assistance in this area.

8. What overall plans exist at present to implement the provisions of the Convention at the national and local levels? Please describe the steps taken to implement article 4 in regard to the allocation "to the maximum extent of (...) available resources for the rights of the child". Please indicate what proportion of the national budget is allocated to social priorities for children in official budgets, both central and local. What indicators or target figures are used in this context?

9. To what extent is international cooperation designed in order to enhance the implementation of the Convention? What share of international assistance is devoted to programmes which benefit children?

10. Please indicate the considerations behind the reservations to articles 1, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22 and 29 of the Convention. Have there been any reviews in order to consider withdrawing these reservations?

4. Mr. YAHYA (Indonesia), replying to issue No. 1, said that, in accordance with Presidential Instruction No. 2/1989, a working group consisting of representatives of various government departments had been established to assist the Central Committee for Child Welfare Improvement in developing policy-related programmes and monitoring their implementation. During the preparation of reports for the Committee on the Rights of the Child, NGOs were invited to provide suggestions and opinions.

5. With regard to issue No. 2, the magazine Anak Kita, which dealt with questions relating to children, was distributed periodically throughout the country and a report on improvements in the situation of Indonesian children was issued annually. Other publications concerning child welfare development programmes were also distributed.

6. With regard to issue No. 3, discussions on the Convention had been organized with officials of the Supreme Court, women's organizations and NGOs.

7. As far as issue No. 4 was concerned, the Government had taken measures to include education about the Convention in the new school programmes which were being prepared.

8. Turning to issue No. 5, he said that the National Council for Child Welfare Development was composed of the Minister Coordinator for Public Welfare, the Minister for Social Affairs, the Minister of Education and

Culture, the Minister of Health and the Minister of the Interior. In the context of the implementation of decree No. 7/1989 on the general policy for improving child welfare, ministries, other public agencies, NGOs and social organizations endeavoured to coordinate their activities in order to improve child welfare.

9. With regard to issue No. 6, the Convention had been legally binding since its publication in the Official Gazette, and its implementation procedures were regulated by presidential decree.

10. With regard to issue No. 7, the report which the Minister Coordinator for Public Welfare had made to the President since 1992 contained a composite child welfare indicator based on statistics compiled by the Central Bureau of Statistics from censuses and surveys. The Minister Coordinator for Public Welfare was also considering setting up a special programme on child statistics.

11. Turning to issue No. 8, he indicated that during the second phase of the long-term development plan the Government intended to try and improve the situation of children and young people. The proportion of the budget allocated to children and young people had already been increased, notably in respect of health, education, social affairs and religion.

12. With regard to issue No. 9, data relevant to the development of children and young people had been included in the general Guidelines of State Policy adopted in 1993. Indonesia appreciated the technical assistance which benefited children provided by UNICEF, UNDP, ILO, WHO, UNESCO and the NGOs.

13. The CHAIRPERSON thanked Mr. Yahya for his information and invited the Committee to put questions to the Indonesian delegation.

14. Mr. HAMMARBERG congratulated the Indonesian Government on ratifying the Convention and submitting its report on time. Recalling that the Convention had been adopted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly, and that the Commission on Human Rights and the World Conference on Human Rights had appealed to States which had entered reservations to withdraw them, he asked the Indonesian delegation to explain the exact extent of its Government's reservations in respect of articles 1, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22 and 29 of the Convention which it had stated would be implemented in conformity with its Constitution (see the text on reservations CRC/C.2/Rev.2, pp. 19 and 20). To which articles of the Constitution did the reservations relate?

15. Mr. MOMBESHORA associated himself with the thanks expressed by previous speakers and, with reference to paragraph 24 of the report (CRC/C/3/Add.10), requested information on the exact status of Indonesia's many minority languages. As a coordinating body, what part did the National Council for Child Welfare Development play in the distribution of resources available among the various ministries and agencies working with children? He also requested precise figures relating to the increase in social expenditure. Finally, he inquired whether Indonesia was endeavouring to set a single age, country-wide, below which a person was considered to be a child.

16. Mrs. SANTOS PAIS also thanked the Indonesian delegation for its replies and expressed the hope that the dialogue would be a fruitful one. She first of all sought clarifications on the reservations expressed by the Indonesian Government in respect of articles 1, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22 and 29 of the Convention. She recalled in that connection that the Convention had been drafted in a holistic spirit, and that the rights which it established were closely interdependent. Expressing a reservation on any one right consequently affected the implementation of other rights. For instance, a working child could not fully exercise its right to education.

17. When a State entered a reservation on an article in the Convention, the question was what became of the right therein established in that State. If it had no information on how the State party interpreted its own reservations, it was difficult for the Committee to appreciate the effect that a reservation had. The second paragraph of the text on Indonesia's reservations was extremely vague and therefore created difficulties for the Committee. How could it tell whether or not a right not reflected in the Constitution in the same way as it was reflected in the Convention was recognized by the Government? The World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna, had called on States to try to formulate their reservations, where they were necessary, clearly and precisely. It was to be hoped that the dialogue between the representatives of Indonesia and the Committee would facilitate a review of their country's reservations. With regard to the third paragraph of the reservations, the replies to the various questions raised would probably give some indication of their effects. Generally speaking, if the Committee was not informed of the precise extent of the reservations, it could not help the Indonesian Government. Indeed, the spirit of consensus and understanding could be undermined; that was certainly not what the Indonesian Government intended.

18. Mrs. BELEMBAOGO thanked the delegation of Indonesia but said that she had some concerns which she wished to state. The initial report referred to a certain number of laws concerning children, but they were not combined in a single code. The consequence of that might be a certain lack of harmony. Could the delegation of Indonesia give some explanations in that regard? The report also referred to a number of programmes which were described in very general terms. The Committee would have liked to have more details as to their content, implementation procedures and real impact on the situation of children.

19. The statistical data appearing in the report were very meagre. Had difficulties been encountered in compiling data? Perhaps some cooperation would be possible in that sphere with United Nations agencies. The compilation of data and statistics was very important for following up the implementation of the Convention, monitoring and assessing programme execution.

20. She wished to call attention to the very disquieting subject of the reservations. They referred to 10 or so articles of the Convention and could well limit its implementation. The rights set forth in the Convention were highly complementary and a reservation entered on one article could well affect the application of another article. Could the Indonesian delegation

provide explanations in that regard and indicate the reasons which had induced Indonesia to enter its reservations? Perhaps some further thought should be given to that issue.

21. Miss MASON said that she also wished to stress the Committee's concern about the reservations. She considered that there were many contradictions between the report and the reservations, particularly in connection with article 14 of the Convention, on freedom of thought, conscience and religion. She would also like to have some explanations about the nine-year compulsory education cycle (CRC/C/3/Add.10, para. 86), in the light of the reservation entered by Indonesia to article 29 of the Convention. The representative of Indonesia had also stated that the Convention was legally binding. What was the status of the Convention vis-à-vis the Constitution? Was the Constitution the main legislative instrument of the country? What exactly were the relations between the Constitution, the Convention and the reserves that had been entered?

22. Mrs. EUFEMIO welcomed the positive aspects of the implementation of the Convention in Indonesia. The composite indicator and the objectives would be very helpful for measuring the progress achieved in child welfare. Could the Indonesian delegation identify the objectives set when the initial report had been drawn up?

23. Mgr. BAMBAREN GASTELUMENDI associated himself with the concerns expressed by the other members of the Committee. He was very interested in the statement by the representative of Indonesia that his country had prepared studies in which government sectors, NGOs, women's organizations and popular organizations had been extensively involved. Were the reservations entered to the Convention also supported by those organizations or did they stem from certain principles, government policy, legislation or the Constitution? It was fundamental to revert to the definition of the child because it had substantial repercussions on numerous areas, such as legal aspects, conflicts with the law, education or health.

24. Mr. KOLOSOV asked what were the reasons that had led Indonesia to ratify the Convention with reservations according to which the ratification of the Convention did not imply the acceptance of obligations going beyond constitutional limits. In international law, accession to a treaty necessitated the adoption of certain additional obligations unless there was a total and complete coincidence between the provisions of the treaty, on one hand, and the Constitution, the legislation and the administrative provisions of the country concerned, on the other. In the initial report of Indonesia, he had not been able to find - with the possible exception of the definition of the child - substantial differences between the obligations stemming from the Convention and the obligations stemming from Indonesian legislation as it was described. For example, it was stated in paragraph 56 of the report that every citizen had the right and freedom to practise any religion according to their faith. How could one then explain the reservation entered on article 14 concerning freedom of thought, conscience and religion?

25. Further, paragraph 59 of the report of Indonesia stated that "Every citizen has rights, but also has obligations as a member of society". That statement did not seem particularly specific. The constitutions of the States

parties to the Convention all contained not only rights but also obligations. The same paragraph of the report stated that Indonesia had its own perception of human rights, which followed an integrated concept. What was there that was particularly specific in the statement that every citizen had rights and obligations? What was therefore the specificity of the perception of the philosophy of Pancasila?

26. Indonesia mentioned seven articles in the third paragraph of the text of its reservations. Why was it necessary to mention those seven articles since in the second paragraph of the reservations it was clearly stated that no provision of the Convention would be applied beyond the limits prescribed under the Constitution? Explanations would be needed on that point.

27. Miss MASON said that she would like to have some explanation about the philosophy of Pancasila, in view of the reservations that had been made.

28. The CHAIRPERSON invited the Indonesian delegation to answer the questions put by members of the Committee.

29. Mr. YAHYA (Indonesia) pointed out that Indonesia had ratified the Convention following a process that had included seminars and workshops attended by various sectors of society (government bodies, NGOs, etc.) as well as jurists. Indonesia was fully aware that the Convention was binding on those who had ratified it. Various national laws were still in contradiction with the Convention, but Indonesia had chosen to ratify it because it was in conformity with the objectives of its national development programme, entering on a provisional basis reservations on those articles which were not in accordance with its national legislation. Those reservations might be reviewed and withdrawn at a later stage. Indonesia used the Convention as one of the mainsprings for a reform of national legislation.

30. With regard to article 1, Indonesia had no objection to the child being defined as a person under 18 years of age; however, Indonesian legislation contained several different definitions of the child. According to Act No. 4/1979, adopted after the International Year of the Child, a child was defined as a person under 21 years of age. Earlier laws concerning children, particularly in respect of employment and marriage, had contained different definitions. Indonesia was now endeavouring to establish a single definition of the child in the context of its second 25-year development programme. In addition, Indonesia was studying article 14 of the Convention and the reservation relating to that article was likely to be withdrawn. Indonesia had entered a reservation on article 16 because of the traditional methods used in the country in bringing up children. The acceptance of that article still created problems for society itself. Generally speaking, with the improvement of the situation in Indonesia and the movement in favour of modernization, all the reservations could be withdrawn some day.

31. Mr. WIDODO (Indonesia) said that Pancasila was the philosophical basis of the Indonesian State and was based on five interlinked principles in the political, socio-economic, cultural and historical spheres. The concept also appeared in the preamble to the 1945 Constitution that marked Indonesia's accession to independence. It was also symbolized in the national emblem which showed a gilded eagle called Garuda, an epic character in Indonesian

history. The gilded star in the centre of the emblem represented the first principle (or Sila), belief in a universal God. The chain symbolized a just and civilized humanity, the circle represented the unity of Indonesia, the black bull on a red background symbolized a democracy guided with wisdom by contact with the people through consultation and finally the cotton bush symbolized the fifth principle, social justice for the whole of the Indonesian people. Concluding his brief statement, he said that religion played a decisive role in the philosophy of Pancasila.

32. Mr. YAHYA (Indonesia) said, in reply to the question by Mr. Mombeshora about the responsibility of the National Council of Child Welfare Development in the allocation of resources that the Council was made up of government officials, members of communities and NGOs. It was supported by the Ministry of Child Welfare Development. The Council identified a certain number of issues related to the development programme and submitted observations and proposals to that Ministry. A coordination authority met each month with ministers or officers in charge of national programmes. The Ministry of Family Planning also had some influence on the allocation of resources to various activities on behalf of children.

33. Since 1993 and in conformity with the guidelines of State policy adopted that year, special measures had been taken on behalf of children and young people. The sixth development programme was being drawn up. Moreover, there had been discussions with ministers with a view to having more resources allocated to programmes and activities that encouraged the implementation of the rights of children. With regard to the right to survival and to development, he stated that the situation of children had improved greatly over the past decade (decline in infant mortality, more satisfactory diet and more children attending school). The Government and the communities had become aware of the need to allocate greater resources, both financial and human, to child welfare development. However, numerous shortcomings remained. The sixth five-year plan envisaged specific activities, including a reform of national law concerning children. He recognized that Indonesia was still a developing country with limited resources for the social sectors. Credits were however being allocated to child welfare and to improving the institutional approach to the family, including children.

34. In reply to Mrs. Santos Pais' question on the implications of the reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, he said that Indonesia endeavoured to implement the Convention in conformity with its own legislation; that implied certain limits. The question of the implementation of the Convention was currently under study in seminars. Moreover, the publication entitled "Incorporation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into national legislation" reviewed all those issues. Work was also going ahead on a review of selected articles of the Convention in the light of new national legislation.

35. Replying to Mrs. Belembaogo's question on the dissemination of information on programmes for children, he said that Indonesia had a population of 180 million dispersed in the 17,000 islands of the Indonesian archipelago and that it was very difficult to disseminate information about the rights of the child. Unlike other programmes, the programmes for children were very recent. Measures were taken to draw up composite indicators

with 26 variables representing different sectors. Indonesia was ready to avail itself of the support of all concerned entities, including the Committee on the Rights of the Child, in order to improve its system for compiling data on children.

36. Replying to a question put by Miss Mason, he said that the Constitution was the fundamental law of Indonesia and that all the other national laws stemmed from the Constitution which contained 37 articles. It was therefore difficult to draw up detailed legislation on children on the basis of so brief a text. The reservation on article 14 of the Convention was currently under review and might well be withdrawn at an early date. By 1994, compulsory education would extend over a nine-year cycle. The purpose of the programme was to press for the development of the child to which there were many obstacles caused by the geography of the Indonesian archipelago and parental opposition. It was therefore important to improve secondary school attendance which continued to be very inadequate, in contrast to primary school attendance which stood at 92 per cent. Indonesia's reservation to article 29 was caused by the difficulties of implementing that article in view of the existence of Law No. 2 on the National Education System, but he hoped that the reservation would be reviewed for the new legislation on children.

37. Mr. WIDODO (Indonesia) said, in reply to the question by Mrs. Eufemio, on the composite indicators for assessing child welfare, that in 1986, the Central Statistical Office had drawn up a composite indicator encompassing 70 variables. The basic idea underlying the preparation of the composite indicator had been to combine all the variables into a single indicator to which a scale of 1 to 10 would be applied. In that way it was easier, for instance, to compare the welfare of children in 27 provinces, assess the progress achieved in welfare and concentrate on the provinces which were lagging behind.

38. Mr. YAHYA (Indonesia), replying to the question about the five-year development plans, explained that the objectives of those plans were taken from sectoral programmes focusing, for instance, on education, health, women, etc. At the present time, Indonesia was drawing up new guidelines for the implementation of a State policy centred on a reform of national legislation which envisaged the inclusion of objectives relating to child policy.

39. Replying to the question on local languages asked by Mr. Mombeshora, he said that those languages were used in limited circumstances, mainly in the family, the official national language of Indonesia being Bahasa.

40. Turning to the question put by Mgr. Bambaren Gastelumendi, he said that the initial report had been drawn up in several phases (seminars, national groups, government representatives and NGOs) and that the reservations to the Convention could also be explained by the composition of the bodies participating in the work on the corresponding issues.

41. On Mr. Kolosov's question about the purpose of the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, he said that ratification was aimed at supporting the national objective of guaranteeing the overall development of

the human person, particularly the child. The articles giving rise to reservations would be reviewed in the light of national legislation. Indonesia was currently engaged in preparing new draft legislation on the conditions for the development of children in Indonesia. The right to education came within Law No. 2 on the National Education System which provided for nine years of compulsory education with effect from 1994.

42. The CHAIRPERSON thanked the representatives of Indonesia for replying to the oral questions put by the Committee and asked whether members wished to make any comments on the answers received.

43. Mr. HAMMARBERG pointed out that in the Beijing Consensus, which had been the outcome of the Conference held in August 1992 in that town under the auspices of UNICEF, an attempt had been made to define what could be done in the context of each country to ensure that the Convention was genuinely applied and that international cooperation was effective. He hoped that in ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Indonesia had become aware of the shortcomings of its own legislation and was prepared to review certain issues and withdraw the existing reservations. He also wished to have a number of explanations. First of all, was it true that the reference in the Constitution excluded from any protection children of stateless persons and that the children of non-nationals were not eligible for the protection provided under the Convention? Did that help to explain the fact that Indonesia's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child did not involve for that State the acceptance of obligations going beyond the constitutional limits? Further, the Indonesian delegation had stated in its introduction that the Convention was binding in Indonesia. Did that mean that it could be invoked in court? If so, there seemed to be a contradiction between that statement and the reservations entered by Indonesia.

44. Moreover, the Beijing Consensus specifically recommended that Governments should schedule resources to promote the rights of the child. The UNDP World Human Development Report mentioned Indonesia and stated that while the level of public expenditure was reasonable, the level of social expenditure was very low. The Indonesian delegation had stated that expenditures of that kind were increasing; he would like more information in that regard. Finally, had machinery been set up to ensure that the rights of the child were taken into account when the State budget was being prepared?

45. Mrs. SANTOS PAIS considered that it was contradictory to state, on the one hand, that the Constitution guaranteed the fundamental rights of children and, on the other hand, that the ratification of the Convention did not involve the obligation to introduce any right or to accept an obligation stemming from the Convention. Further, since Indonesia stated in its reservations that anything that was incompatible with the Convention could not be applied, why did it enumerate a precise list of articles of the Convention? Was it simply an explanation, intended to indicate the only articles that might create a problem or an addition to the preceding general statement? Moreover, when the Indonesian delegation stated that the Convention was binding in the country, did it mean the Convention as a whole or solely the provisions which were not incompatible with the Constitution?

46. Moreover, the report of Indonesia referred to five inseparable principles on which the Indonesian nation's outlook on life was based. The Committee naturally respected those principles. However, the World Conference on Human Rights had reaffirmed the universality of human rights and fundamental freedoms. How could those two approaches be reconciled?

47. Article 4 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child made it incumbent upon all States parties to undertake "all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention". The Convention therefore created an obligation for States parties to change or amend their legislation in the event of incompatibility between the provisions of the Convention and those of national law. The fact of ratifying the Convention committed a State party to apply all the rights recognized by the Convention. She was, however, gratified that the Indonesian authorities had indicated their willingness to review the reservations entered, albeit in the light of the national legislation rather than the Convention.

48. Mr. MOMBESHORA said that he would like to have more detailed information, including statistics, on the distribution of resources to the social sectors. The report submitted by Indonesia was an initial report and statistics could help, in the future, to evaluate the progress made. Moreover, what were the factors used by Indonesia to assess the extent to which it was complying with the provisions of the Convention?

49. Mr. KOLOSOV said that he wished first of all to reaffirm that he was unable to accept the statement that Indonesia had its own perception of human rights. The universality of human rights was unquestionable. Nothing in the philosophy based on the principles of Pancasila contradicted the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Moreover, when one studied the reservations entered by Indonesia upon ratifying other international instruments, that country did not appear to have made the same kind of reservations.

50. However, the reservations concerning the Convention on the Rights of the Child referred solely to the Constitution and not to national legislation. It was therefore vital to make a comparison between the Constitution and articles 1, 14, 16, 17, 21, 22 and 29 of the Convention in order to ascertain whether there really were contradictions which could preclude Indonesia from implementing the Convention.

51. Mrs. EUFEMIO recalled that the procedure for the consideration of reports by States parties did not solely involve studying their legislation but also the possibility of assessing progress or results. It was therefore essential for the Committee to be able to base itself on reliable indicators.

52. Miss MASON said that she had the impression that Indonesia had ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child somewhat hastily. The Indonesian authorities seemed, however, to be willing to review the reservations entered, particularly since the articles mentioned in those reservations were not incompatible with the fundamental principles of Indonesia, with the possible exception of article 21. She wished, however, to know whether Indonesia would commit itself to review the reservations it had entered.

53. Mr. HAMMARBERG considered that the problem could be boiled down to three questions. First, was there a contradiction between the Convention and the Indonesian Constitution? Did the wording of the reservations entered whereby "The ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the Republic of Indonesia does not imply the acceptance of obligations going beyond the constitutional limits ..." mean that Indonesia was not bound by the Convention in the case of rights not specified in its Constitution. If the answers to those two questions were in the negative, was that formulation then necessary?

54. Mrs. SANTOS PAIS pointed out that in its general guidelines regarding the form and content of initial reports to be submitted by States parties under article 44, paragraph 1 (a), of the Convention, the Committee had taken the view that the process of preparing a report should be one "that encourages and facilitates popular participation". She would therefore like to know whether non-governmental organizations had participated in that process and whether national organizations had been established in order to promote the rights of the child. The report of Indonesia indicated that 300 languages were spoken and that the population of the country was divided very unequally among the various regions. Consequently, it must be difficult to secure popular participation. How did Indonesia overcome those problems? How far could the NGOs, national and international, participate in work on human rights?

55. Mr. YAHYA (Indonesia) recognized that there were problems and obstacles standing in the way of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Constitution of Indonesia was not at odds with the Convention, but problems remained in the national legislation. There were still laws which were at variance with the Convention. That was why certain articles of the Convention could not be applied in everyday life unless reforms were undertaken at the legislative level. For that reason, reservations had been made. However, national legislation would be amended to bring it into line with all the articles of the Convention.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.